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## Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.  
Eternal God, the fountain of every blessing, we lift our hearts in praise to You for You have done marvelous things. You direct our steps each day, guiding us with Your powerful providence and showering us with undeserved mercies. You hear our prayers and speedily supply our needs. Bless today the work of our lawmakers, empowering them with unceasing awareness and openness of heart. Give them wisdom and courage to glorify You through their work. May their thoughts, words, and actions be acceptable to You for You are our rock and our redeemer. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

### COMPREHENSIVE VETERANS HEALTH AND BENEFITS AND MILITARY RETIREMENT PAY RESTORATION ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to Calendar No. 297.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 297, S. 1950, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans and for other purposes.

### SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will resume consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 2642, the farm bill. The time until 12:30 p.m. will be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senate will recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings. At approximately 2:35 p.m. there will be a rollcall vote on the adoption of the farm bill conference report.

### VISIONARY REMARKS

Mr. REID. While the President pro tempore is here, I want to make a brief comment.

The headlines over the last couple of days have been about the death—in my opinion—of one of the great actors of our time, Philip Seymour Hoffman. He obviously died from a drug overdose of heroin.

The reason I wanted to say a word while the President pro tempore is presiding is because the Governor of Vermont was very visionary in directing his State of the State remarks this year to the scourge of heroin addiction that is sweeping the Nation. It really is a scourge.

According to everything I have been able to learn, it is kind of unique. We have people who start off with some kind of prescription drug and then wind up with this stuff that has been prepared by purveyors of evil. They don't know what is in it. There are some who believe they use baby laxative or other ingredients that look like heroin. It is a terrible shame.

I will send the Governor a letter, but I want to make sure my good friend from Vermont personally tells the Governor what a—I can't find a better word—visionary he was in the remarks he gave a few weeks ago.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). THE SENATOR FROM VERMONT.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the RECORD will indicate that I opened the Senate in my role as President pro tempore, and now the distinguished Senator from New Jersey is in the Chair.

I wish to respond to the distinguished senior Senator from Nevada and thank him for what he said.

I was in Montpelier, which is our capital, on Friday, and I spent some time with Governor Peter Shumlin, who did his State of the State message on this subject, as the distinguished Senator from Nevada has said. I talked to him about it. I will call him later this morning and tell him what the leader said. I am also going to wear my hat as chair of the Judiciary Committee and do a hearing on this issue.

Ours is a very special and very precious State, but I think it points out that every State in the Union can face this problem. While on the national news this morning, Governor Shumlin was great and focused the attention of this issue on many States.

I will close by saying to my dear friend from Nevada that I appreciate his comments. He knows how precious Vermont is to me and Governor Shumlin, and I will make sure the Governor knows what he said.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

### A MAN OF STATURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I had a meeting with a number of Senators this morning, and one of the topics of conversation was the Presiding Officer's first speech—the so-called maiden speech—he gave last night. It was stunningly good, substantive, and it came from the heart. That is what many Senators told me this morning, and I agree. As I told the Presiding Officer last night, I had to go to a quick meeting, so I watched most of it from my office. The Senator's speech was so important. The speech focused on dealing with people who are in need.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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